## September 18, 2009 - Murtha Lands \$2 million for Washington Township Sewer Project

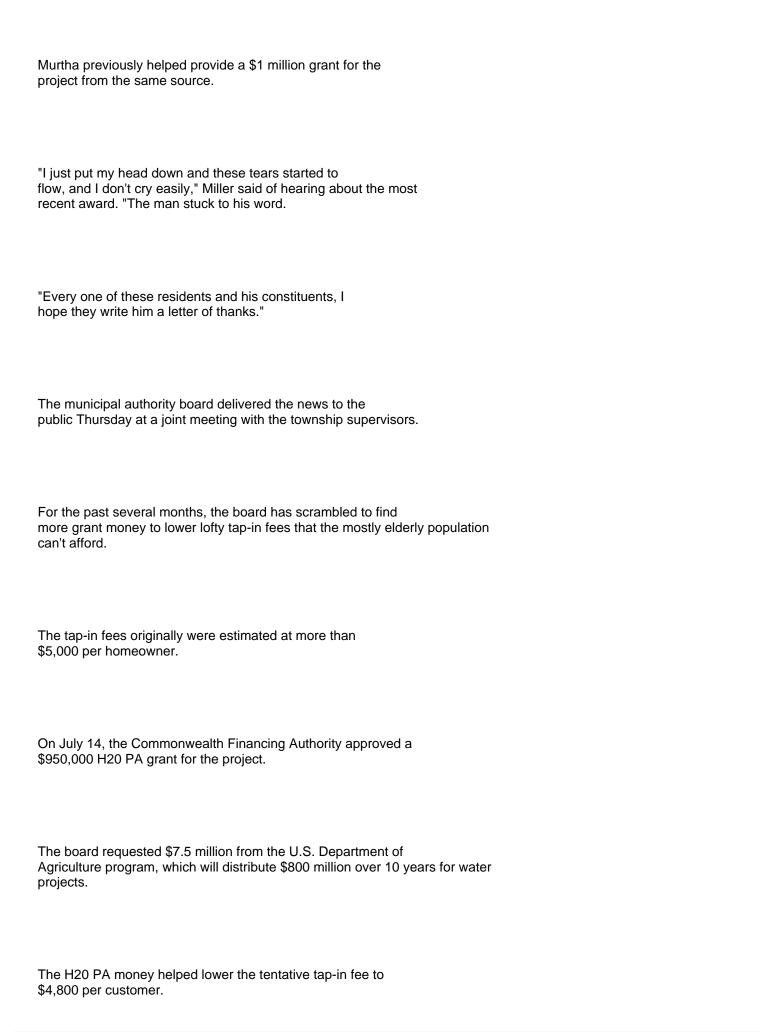
Valley Independent www.pittsburghlive.com Murtha lands \$2 million for Washington Township sewer project By Jeff Pikulsky VALLEY INDEPENDENT Friday, September 18, 2009 WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP - When township resident Jamie Miller met U.S. Rep. John Murtha on the 2002 campaign trail, she asked him to find grant money for a much-needed sewer project. "He looked me right in the eye and said, 'When Washington Township needs me, I'm going to be there," she recalled. Miller, now a township supervisor, said she and the community are thankful the Johnstown Democrat made good on his promise.

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Township officials Wednesday learned that Murtha has secured

million sewer project at a most crucial time.

a \$2 million grant through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the \$20.8



In July, the authority board members said they would seek a 40-year low-interest loan from the Rural Utilities Service, a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The board originally planned to borrow up to \$7 million to lower the tap-in fees and increase monthly service rates in exchange.

Board Chairwoman Dee Fisher said, because of the \$2 million grant, the projected tap-in fee will be \$625.

The board now plans to borrow about \$5 million from RUS at a 2.6 percent interest rate.

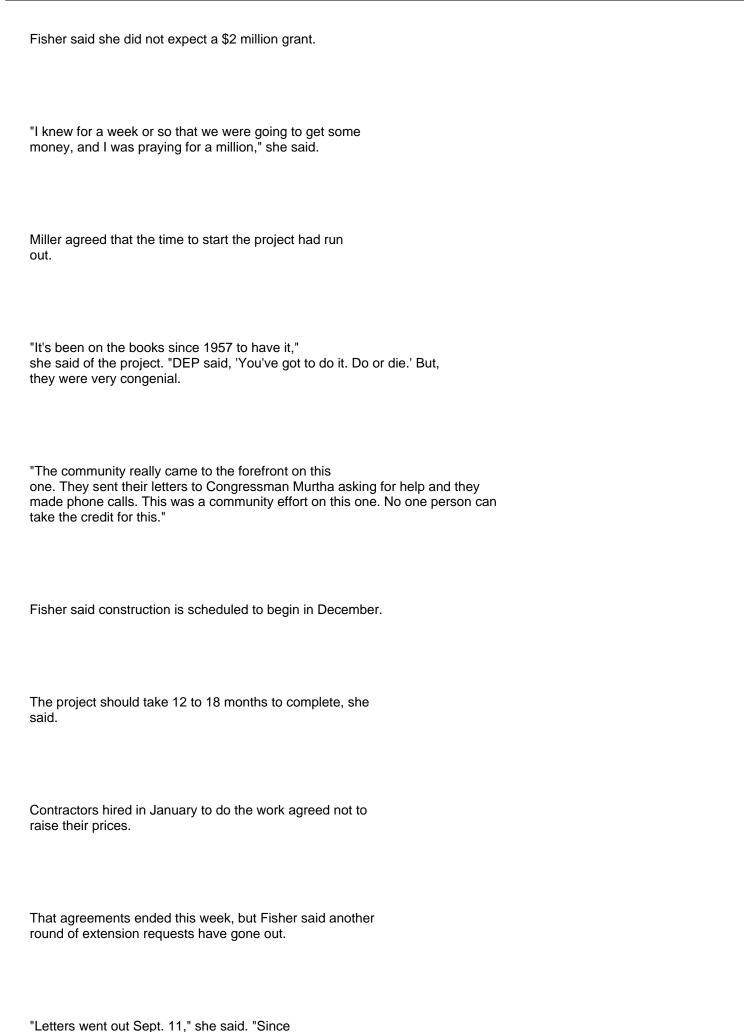
Monthly rates are now estimated at \$61, Fisher said.

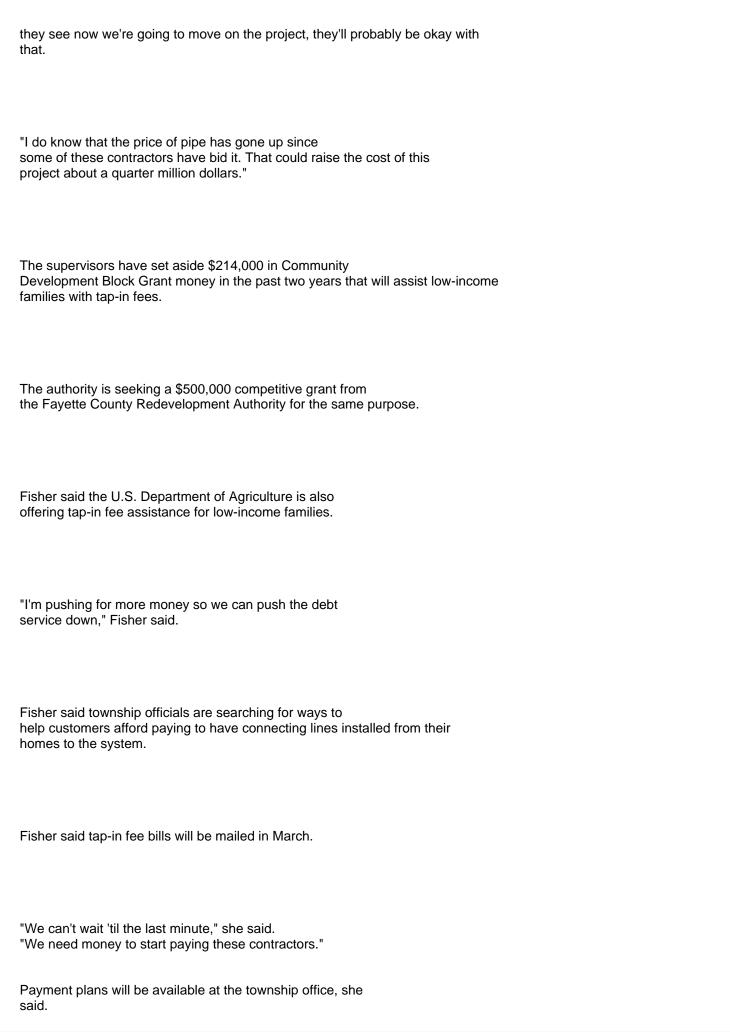
Fisher said Murtha came through for the township at "the 11th hour."

The state Department of Environmental Protection and the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority - which is providing a \$1.2 million grant and a low-interest 30-year, \$9.8 million loan for the project - recently warned authority officials that the township would soon face penalties if the project did not begin.

"DEP said they're tired of fooling around with us and we don't have a choice," Fisher said. "If we didn't move now, they weren't going to be kind with us.

"PennVEST has been holding our money for about two years, so we had to move. It was to the point that I got a very good impression that we better do it or we're going to be in court."





Fisher said information about assistance programs will be sent to customers with their bills.

She extended her gratitude to Murtha on behalf of the township.

"We are ecstatic," she said. "We really thank him from the bottom of our hearts. He promised a long time ago he would help us as soon as he could and he really came through. I just thank him forever. My heart's relieved."